



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/692,554	10/24/2003	Yasuyuki Kawashima	11333/29	1129

7590 07/27/2006

Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione
NBC Tower
NBC Tower, Suite 3600
P.O. Box 10395
Chicago, IL 60610

EXAMINER

LEVKOVICH, NATALIA A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1743

DATE MAILED: 07/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/692,554	KAWASHIMA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Natalia Levkovich	1743	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15-24 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-14, drawn to a sample analyzer, classified in class 422, subclass 68.1.
 - II. Claims 15-24, drawn to a solution, classified in class 436, subclass 18.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions I and II are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, the solution has separate utility such as, for example, a titrant. See MPEP § 806.05(d).
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. During a telephone conversation with Mr. Gregory Zayia on 06/15/2006 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-14. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 15-24 were withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claims 2-6, 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being unclear for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 2-6, 11 and 13 are narrative, replete with functional language and do not set forth any further structural limitations. It is unclear what structural features provide for the recited functionality.

In claim 2, lines 5 and 7, 'may be washed' is indefinite. Is it washed, or is it not washed?

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

8. Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Chupp et al. (US 5631165).

Art Unit: 1743

With respect to claims 1 and 10, Chupp discloses an automated analyzer for “distinguishing and differentiating cells in a sample”. The device comprises, as shown in Figures 3- 5, a sample processing area 110 [‘sample preparation unit’ – Ex.], aspiration probe 156 [‘pipette’ – Ex.] and “probe wash and dry unit” (not indexed). The system also includes “a dilution syringe coupled to the tubing network 182”, flow cells / impedance transducers 170, 174,178 [‘detection units’ – Ex.] and a controller (Col.7, lines 20-30).

In reference to claims 2, 5-6, 8-9 and 11-13, note that the acidic solution is not positively claimed to be considered a part of the invention, and, therefore, is not accorded any patentable weight.

As to claim 7, the impedance transducer 174 “performs impedance-based cell counting and sizing (Col. 39, lines 35 plus). “The data station 68 of the cell analysis system 60 has memories and other devices which apply algorithms for various cellular analyses. These algorithms are used to analyze clusters of data points generated by the analysis module 64 to yield information of clinical relevance. The disclosed integrated hematology/immunology instrument provides a single platform on which such software may be implemented, thereby providing an instrument that not only automates hematology and immunology sample processing and measurement, but also automates data analysis” (Col. 45, lines 55-60).

Referring to claim 14, Chupp teaches urine samples in column 10, line 47.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

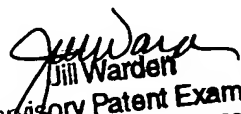
Hoshiko et al. (US 6114292) – discloses a hematological analyzer sampling probe cleansing method employing wash solutions with pH from 5.0 to 2.0;

Grandone (US 5289385) – discloses an analyzer having a wash station and an adaptive scheduling system.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Natalia Levkovich whose telephone number is 571-272-2462. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 8 a.m.-4p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on 571-272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Jill Warden
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700